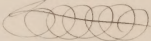


Albion

Saml. Johnson

1809.

An Essay on Chlorosis,
for the Degree
of Doct. of Medicine,
Submitted to the examination,
of the Medical Professors,
of the Provost, &
of the Trustees, of the
University of Pennsylvania.
By Samuel Johnson
of Maryland.



April 1809

In offering my sentiments on
Chlorosis, in a Dissertation for the
attainment of medical honours,
perhaps I have unfortunately
blundered upon a subject illig-
suited to my want of experience
& mature observation; but as my
chief object will be to glance at
the important claim, I conceive
it has, on medical attention, &
cordially desirous to become a
Disposer of a small share of that
attention, it will I hope excuse my
injudicious choice — should
time have permitted I should
have been much pleased in having

Chosen a subject better suited to my capacity.

Chloidsis generally makes its insidious appearance about the age of puberty, when the delicate system is under the influence of that material change towards maturity, which marks perhaps the most critical period of the female life. — here any slight deviation from the salutary paths of nature predispose the System to very troublesome complaints; the System perhaps, is at no period more acceptable to disease. But Chlorosis does not appear to be solely confined to

the commencement of menstruation,
in its origin, — in some delicate ha-
bits it occurs some time before
that period, & at various times af-
ter it. In its commencement the de-
licate patient is observed to languish,
with unusual Debility, lassitude &
depression of Spirits, the cheeks
grow rosy & pale, vivacity forsakes
the countenance, the eyes look hea-
vy & a bluish cast (more or less)
is observed beneath them, Digestion
is vitiated appetite takes place,
creating very absurd cravings, after
chalk, clay, cinders, burnt feathers
&c; an indisposition to motion,
accelerated respiration on the least

exercise, & a fluttering & undulating
inquietude are felt about the
præcordia, the pulse becomes quick
& frequent, though variable accord-
-ing to the degree of febrile action
in the system, head ache sometimes
attended more or less of pain about the
loins & pelvis are pretty general, &
costiveness, — at times a general
torpor creeps over the system, the
urine becomes increased in quan-
-tity & of a pal colour, though lia-
-ble to change, — when these
symptoms are allowed to continue
for a while a dematous swellings
commence which frequently
terminate in Dropsy — retention

of the Menstrues & Suppression are
almost inseparable with Chlorosis,
but are not to be considered as the
sole cause of this complaint; when
concomitant they tend to aggravate
each other. Particular constitutions
under particular circumstances,
are more or less subject to Chlorosis.
As Debility is the parent of Disease
under all its various forms & grades,
it holds also its share in laying the
Fabric of this disease; this Debi-
lity is constitutional; & acquired.
an excess of Physical, & bodily
sensibility are peculiar to delicate
systems, their mode of nurture tends
to effeminate the constitution,

Especially among females in the
higher stations of life, where Delicacy
of constitution & high toned
sensibility are sought after as the
refined state of invulnerability is preferred,
those who are of such constitutions,
may be said to be admirably primed
for the influence of the passions;
The intercommunion of sensation
here is extremely alert & the mind
is more ambitious, craving & in=
=sensitive of desires & less able to brook
the want of gratification in them,
owing to the facility with which
the mind & body take on the influ=
=ence of impressions. — There are
often causes among females

(best known to themselves) which
render them liable (as all mankind
are) to disappointments in the grati-
fication of those desires & propensi-
ties, which might afford them plea-
surable sensations & give energy
to the impulses of life; — These
disappointments become sources
of inquietude & grief, pressing
upon the constitution cannot do
otherwise than abstract a portion
from those stimuli which are
so indispensable in the performance
of all our functions in a healthy
state. — It is evident that among
animals in the ordinary walks of
life, whose wants are few, —

Their sensual appetites less nice,
More liable to receive gratification
& who enjoy all the benefits of fresh
air & wholesome exercise are seldom
visited with Chlorosis. Therefore
where it arises, it seems peculiarly
concomitant with delicacy of con-
stitution & excess of Physical & Corporeal
sensibility, under the influence
of the passions chiefly. — retention
irregularity in the flowing of the
menstrues, so generally attendant on
Chlorosis, are alike peculiar to such
constitutions as mentioned above.
The indication of cure should be
the same as in morbid excitement
from other causes, with the proviso

of a great
thorough
the pas-
to be ex-
much for
themselves
for few
so gener-
numerous
more pa-
practices
only of
may re-
produce
change
it may
very deli-

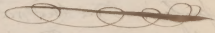
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of a great deal of benefit to ^{be} done
through the instrumentality of
the passions, where I conceive there
to be egregiously in fault: where
much pain & febrile action are present
- venesection & the usual remedies
for fever are proper; - the mode
so generally employed, of exhibiting
emmenagogue medicines, are a
mere palliative method, by this
practice you remove a symptom
only of the complaint, which
may repeatedly recur unless you
produce some more material
change in the general habit. -
it may do perhaps to treat some
very delicate constitutions in this

way when it appears to be the only
alternative of success; for this pur-
-pose perhaps the moderately sti-
-mutating purgatives & Tonics, would
be better suited, & those which act
chiefly on the uterine organs, as
Tinct. of Scllebone, some of the tribe
Siliquosa, I should look upon as
very good purgatives here, & also
some of the Alliacea, Rubigo ferri
& Sabina & Camomile Flowers &c,
when any of the purgative ^{men-}stru-
-gogues can be made subservient
also to the purpose of abating
costiveness, which is frequently
attendant on Chlorosis I think they
are then always advisable, here

Calomel & Aloes appear to be ad-
mirably suited. - But little suc-
cess can be hoped towards perman-
ent relief without obviating
the Debility, & restoring energy
to the system, after the febrile
action hath been subdued. For
this purpose some of the Tonics
mentioned, with the help of the
Bark are well adapted - but we
should not lose sight of the
passions in the mean time,
patients should enjoy fresh
air, a change of scenes, place
& company. Perhaps, would also
be favourable, their minds
should be engaged by objects

which tend to amuse them &
keep alive their Spirits, nothing
more effectually accomplishes
these ends, than the sweets of
a matrimonial life, advantage
should always be taken of this,
where it is acceptable with pro-
prietty, few married women
in the possession of amiable
& gratifying husbands are
ever visited with Chlorosis.



~~Chlorosis~~